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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PRAGUE 000332

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SUBJECT: CZECH DEPUTY MINISTER OF INTERIOR LAYS OUT PLAN TO
FIGHT EXTREMISM

REF: PRAGUE 310

Classified By: Political-Economic Counselor Charles O. Blaha, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: One of the few issues the interim technocratic government of Prime Minister Jan Fischer will address is extremism. Interior Minister Martin Pecina named former police official Jiri Komorous as his First Deputy Minister and assigned him to lead the Interior Ministry's new anti-extremism task force. The task force is intended to be the government's primary tool to combat anti-Roma extremism, which has recently gained visibility in the Czech Republic (ref). Komorous has formed his task force and given it marching orders with tight deadlines. He says he wants the task force to formulate actionable items that will produce immediate results. However, Komorous' past and his black-and-white approach may inhibit his efforts. End Summary.

Komorous on Extremism in the Czech Republic

¶2. (SBU) In a June 10 meeting, Komorous discussed the root causes of extremism in the Czech Republic and his plan for combating it. Komorous said extremism is becoming more visible in Europe, not just the Czech Republic. He cited the results of the recent European Parliament elections, where he said extremist parties in other EU countries gained seats in the European Parliament. According to Komorous, frustration over a lack of solutions, loss of "Christian values" and a desire for fast and easy solutions led people to seek radical solutions through extremist groups. He views extremism in the Czech Republic as a simple and solvable problem. According to Komorous, nationalism is not the root cause of extremism since the Czech Republic does not have a history of nationalism. He said the extremism here is mainly focused on the Roma in certain localities, Northern Bohemia being the prime example, but he also noted that the Vietnamese were occasionally the focus of extremism as well.

¶3. (SBU) One challenge he faces is the increasing sophistication and professionalism of extremist groups, including the use of the internet and other technologies to rally support and disperse messages, as well as the increasing use of lawyers to wage legal battles against the government. He noted the recent decision by Czech television to pull a political advertisement of the National Resistance extremist political party after it was aired one time. Komorous claimed the National Resistance strategists knew it would be pulled and banned, but that their website received so many hits after the advertisement was banned that it crashed three times. This, Komorous opined, was the ultimate goal. He said the National Resistance and similar groups are targeting young males who feel isolated, marginalized, may be inclined to violence, and are in search of an understandable solution.

¶4. (SBU) Komorous claimed that support for extremists is increasing because people are frustrated over a lack of

action and solutions by the government. He said that during extremist marches, residents living in the vicinity of the areas where marches are held are now blowing whistles to alert the extremists when police are coming. He viewed this as tacit, growing support for the extremists among individuals who usually do not support them. He also thought that there is a sentiment emerging among non-Roma that a double standard exists - that is, non-Roma are held to a higher standard than Roma.

Extremism Task Force Structure

15. (SBU) Komorous' formed his task force quickly and divided it into three sub-groups. The first sub-group is comprised of specialists from the police and intelligence services and is designed to evaluate how well the various agencies are sharing information and intelligence on extremist groups. His goal is to obtain real-time operational intelligence, or a "warning system" that can be used to preempt extremist incidents. Komorous would also like coordinators who specifically deal with extremism to be assigned to municipal governments. He has asked this group to define weaknesses in the current system and to make recommendations to address the weaknesses by no later than June 15.

16. (SBU) The second sub-group will focus on legal and judicial aspects of the extremism issue and is comprised of legal experts from the Ministries of Interior and Justice, including prosecutors. Komorous wants this group to define current legal measures, identify failings in the current system that prevent successful prosecution of extremists, and

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recommend if additional legislation should be proposed -- all by June 22.

17. (SBU) The third sub-group is a general assembly comprised of government officials and NGOs. The goal of this sub-group, which met for the first time on June 12, is to promote communication. Komorous wants to enhance the dialogue by making the actions of the task force transparent. He feels this will ultimately create trust among all the partners (Comment: NGOs working with Roma have always been suspicious of the police and government attempts at bridge building. End Comment). Komorous commented that the Roma have a Christian tradition and he would like the church to become more involved in Roma communities. He has asked (or will ask) each sub-group to focus on strategies and tactics for solving the extremist problem.

An Emphasis on "Judeo-Christian Values"

18. (C) The infusion of Judeo-Christian values was a leit motif in Komorous' plan to combat extremism. (Comment: Komorous is known to be a member of the secret society Ordo Lumen Templi, an order established by Czech musician and actor Daniel Landa. Some of Landa's earlier compositions - for example, White League - were overtly racist. Landa has since distanced himself from his racist past, blaming it on immaturity; however, his Ordo Lumen Templi has been compared to the Ordo Novi Templi, a Christian occult established in 1907 by an Austrian monk who promoted a vision of racial purity. End Comment). Komorous said that the criminal elements some in the Czech Republic associate with Roma communities - drugs, prostitution, theft - can be best addressed by offering alternatives. He added that drugs were the biggest problem among the Roma because, he claimed, Roma are more prone to addiction. He also noted that when he was chief of the National Anti-Drug center he would occasionally receive telephone requests from Roma leaders (known as vajda, or kings) asking him to incarcerate Roma youth who were involved in drugs.

19. (SBU) Komorous predicted his greatest challenge would be

judicial. He believes the judiciary's approach to this issue was too formal and that prosecutors did not investigate all possible avenues for prosecution of extremist groups. Komorous believes that greater cooperation between the investigators and prosecutors is the essential component to successful prosecution of extremist crimes and cited that failure to abolish the extremist Workers Party (DS) as an example. The Interior Minister of the previous ODS government tried to abolish the DS through the Supreme Administrative Court, but the legal motion failed in March 2009 because the Court ruled that the evidence was insufficient to prove the party represented a real threat to democracy. Komorous' boss, Interior Minister Pecina, has pledged to lodge another legal motion. Komorous feels there was sufficient evidence to prosecute but that bickering and inter-agency fighting was responsible for the failure to prosecute. Komorous dismissed the argument that the extremists freedom of expression or assembly is being inhibited. He said he will seek the arrest and prosecution of any extremist who breaks the law.

Enthusiasm, With Black-and-White Views

10. (C) Comment: Komorous has spent his entire career with the police, having joined in 1984 and been the chief of the National Anti-Drug Center from 1995 until last year. He has the military bearing of a uniformed officer accustomed to clear chain of command. His tactical nature was evident in his approach to the problem. Komorous is fueled with enthusiasm and eager to find a solution. However, Komorous' past may inhibit his efforts. In addition to criticisms about his involvement in the Ordo Lumen Templi, Komorous was alleged to have contacts with the former communist secret police (StB) before 1989, although the Interior Ministry later certified that he never collaborated with the StB. Komorous' black-and-white, law enforcement view of the extremist issue and possible solutions may not carry over as easily to the political arena, where arguments are nuanced and solutions subtle. His task force approach and desire to force action through strict deadlines are encouraging, but may not be realistic. End Comment.
Thompson-Jones